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Overseers of their political Principles. slept at M<sup>r</sup> Clark's. Horse on his Hay.

24. *Wednesday.* Went (my H: and ch) with M C to Framingham. Din'd at Cap't Freeman's slept and H: there.

25. Din'd at Capt Freeman's: Drank Coffee at Mr Habij<sup>b</sup> Savages. slept at Capt. Freeman's H: there. Sally Chardon left our House.

26. Left Capt Freemans after Breakfast. I din'd at Watertown Mr Bemis's. M<sup>rs</sup> C. We call'd at Mr. Dennies. slept at home. H: at Mr T.

27. M<sup>rs</sup> Cooper taken ill of a Fever p. m.

*Lord's day. Apr. 28.* D<sup>r</sup> Chauncey pch'd, a. m. I p. m. D. Newell bro't my part of Contribution. 13: 19: 3. O Ten<sup>r</sup>.

*Friday 4<sup>th</sup> [3] May.* D<sup>r</sup> Chauncey pch'd Friday Lecture M<sup>rs</sup> C. dangerously ill.

*Lord's day. 6 [5] May.* Dr. Chauncey pch'd and administer'd. I pch'd p. m. M<sup>rs</sup> C. very ill.

*Monday.* D. Newell bro't my part of Contribution. 8—18—1. O. Ten<sup>r</sup>.

*Lord's day. 13<sup>th</sup> [1st]* D<sup>r</sup> Chauncey pch'd a. m. I p. m.

*Monday. 14. [13].* D. Williams bro't my half of Contribution—7—5—2. O Ten<sup>r</sup>.

*Friday, 17 May.* Continental Fast.<sup>1</sup> D<sup>r</sup> Chauncey a. m. I p. m. gave Notice in publick that divine Service w'd be perform'd by divine Leave in our Meeting-house <sup>2</sup> next Lord's day.

## 2. Letter of John Quincy Adams, 1811.

For the following document we are indebted to Dr. James Westfall Thompson, of the University of Chicago. It is a dispatch sent by John Quincy Adams to the Department of State during the time when he was Minister in Russia. The manuscript, which is in the possession of Mr. Frederick M. Steele of Chicago, was secured in London. It is believed to have been intercepted by a British cruiser claiming to exercise the right of search. The portions comprised in brackets were written in cipher, and have been translated for Doctor Thompson by a clerk in the Department of State. The translation had to be made out, syllable by syllable, from old letters, on file among the early records, in which the same cipher is used; for the Department does not possess a copy of the cipher code then employed. For the subject-matter, see *Memoirs of John Quincy Adams*, Vol. II., *passim*.

<sup>1</sup> *Journals*, 1776, p. 93; *Diary of John Tudor*, p. 63.

<sup>2</sup> During the siege, Brattle Street Church had been used by the British "for a barracks".

ADAMS TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

N. 70.

ST. PETERSBURG, 3. October 1811.

The Secretary of State  
of the United States

Sir :

I have furnished the French Ambassador, as he requested, with a list of the American vessels which have arrived this year at Cronstadt, and have sailed again for the United States. I have also sent a copy of the same list to Mr. Russell at Paris, by a courier despatched last Monday by Count Lauriston ; and have mentioned to Mr. Russell in a letter the motive upon which it was requested—to obtain a more speedy liberation of any of them which might be captured by the French privateers said to be stationed at the passage of the Sound. When the Courier was despatched I had already heard that Mr. Barlow had sailed from Annapolis for France, and I learn this morning that he arrived the 6th of last month at Cherbourg. Having understood from Mr. Russell that it was his intention to leave Paris immediately after the Minister should arrive, I have requested that Mr. Barlow would in that case open the letter, addressed to Mr. Russell. I hope there will be no capture of any of the vessels, to make the interposition of either of those gentlemen, with the French Government, necessary to obtain their release. But if there should, I shall be happy to find the good intentions of the Ambassador in asking for the list realized, by its contributing to their immediate liberation. I am not inclined to suspect any unfriendly intention towards us, as having contributed in the slightest degree to this request. There is a frankness and good humor in the character of the Ambassador, in which deep dissimulation is not congenial. He has often very freely and explicitly avowed to me his wish for a war between the United States and England. Having in my own nature as little dissimulation, as I think observable in his, I have never pretended in this respect to coincide with him in sentiment ; [but I have more than once suggested to him that if his Government really wished that war should be the result of English ill-usage towards the United States, it was a strange way of manifesting that desire to rivalize with England in acts of the like ill-usage, and I have not scrupled to avow to him that so long as France should continue to hold towards us such a course of conduct, it was my opinion that neither the people nor the Government of the United States would engage themselves in a war which would be so conformable to her views and policy.] He has assured me in strong terms of *his own* wish that his Government should do us justice, and his disposition to write anything that might be proper to promote the same temper there ; and I am willing to believe that this was his real and principal inducement for asking the information contained in this list. [At the same time I am aware that it *might* be for purposes of an opposite nature and I know that the French Minister of Foreign Affairs has informed the French Consul here that he

had received advices that much English property had been introduced here under the American flag, and has enjoined upon him a most vigilant attention and a report how the fact in this respect was. The report which was sent by the same courier with my letter I have reason to believe was as favorable so far as concerns Americans as the truth would warrant. The Consul] has declared to me his opinion that every vessel which has arrived this year at Cronstadt *with a cargo* under any other than American colours, was loaded on English account. The number of those vessels however amounts only to eleven. As to the Americans he assured me that he fully credited the statement which I made verbally to him in conversation, and that he would report accordingly to his Government. I told him that, independent of any credit which he might be disposed to give me from confidence, he might observe that the *interest* of my countrymen trading here was impulse enough for them and me to detect as much as we could the counterfeit who came as their competitors in the market, and as to the introduction of English property here, I asked his attention to two facts which in my mind amounted to complete demonstration that its amount had really been very small. The first was that during the whole season no insurance had been obtainable in London, upon shipments of goods to Russian ports in the Baltic, and the other that the course of exchange had constantly been from fifty to sixty per cent. against England and in favour of Russia. He admitted the weight of these facts, of the first of which he had not been aware ; and he said he should not fail to avail himself of both in his report. Of the American vessels, thirty-three came in ballast, and I presume were either freighted in England, or came here for freights to England. In all these cases the Government here have scarcely wished to look at the Papers. Mr. [Gurieff, the Minister (of) Finance, to whose Department this matter now belongs, once told me in express terms that if a ship came empty he did not care whence she came, and was not inclined to scrutinize what she was.] This disposition obtained admission for the Crescent, though reported by Mr. Harris as irregular, and came very near carrying through the Angerona, when the Captain lost his papers to secure their forgery from detection. [The Ambassador and Consul know very well that these ships that came in ballast will return bound to England for whatever port they may have cleared out. When they have been real Americans I have not felt myself obliged to be more scrupulous in enquiring whence they came than the Russian Government ; it was not my duty to accuse them nor to point them out by any discrimination from the rest. They will] doubtless [return as they came under convoy, and will be in very little danger of capture either by French or Danish privateers. Their freightings are certainly profitable to the general mass of our commerce, but I think it necessary to say *to you* that abuse of our flag is more difficult to detect in their trading than in the case of forgery. I have my suspicions that in more than one instance of those that came this summer, altho' the vessel and papers and even the master and crew were really American,

the property was English ; and I am not sure there were not cases in which everything was English but the papers. I feel my whole bounden duty therefore once more to suggest the expediency of further legislative provision against the sale of real American ships papers whether (with) or without the ship in foreign ports.]

There have been indeed several cases of American vessels, which came with *Cargoes* last from England ; the admission of which I have obtained. But they have all been accompanied with proof that they were dispatched from the United States, and bound here, and that they have been detained in English ports, either by capture, by stress of weather, or by the necessity of repairing or *changing* the ship. The proofs have been clear. I have interfered without hesitation, and in every instance have obtained their admission. I know also of several instances in which vessels under similar circumstances obtained admission without my interference. [There have been so many of them in all that possibly other causes than mere compulsion made some of them touch at English ports. I know that before the navigation opened this Government received notice from Mr. Daschkoff that a large proportion of the American vessels coming to Russia this season would take England in their way. This was not forbidden by any law of the United States. How far it was compatible with the law of Russia was for this Government to determine. I never disguised or even concealed a fact from them which could bear upon the principle when I asked for a favour or an exemption from the rigour of the Ukaze, and many vessels have been admitted which the rigour of the Ukaze would have excluded. It is not probable that any further questions of this nature will occur the present year, and it is too (ear)ly to look forward for the ruling principles of the next, but it is not too soon to say that the safety of our real commerce with Russia may still depend upon its discrimination from the imposture which assumes its garb.]

My quarterly account is enclosed, with which I have still to repeat the request at the close of my letter N. 57, dated 6 July last.

I am, with great respect, Sir,

Your very hu<sup>bl</sup> and obd<sup>t</sup> serv<sup>t</sup>.

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS.